

**James Madison to William Eustis, May 22, 1823.  
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,  
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,  
1900-1910.**

**TO WILLIAM EUSTIS. MAD. MSS.**

Montpr., May 22, 1823

Dear Sir I recd. by the last mail, your welcome favr. of the 10th instant. The newspapers had prepared me for the triumphant vote which restores a prodigal sister to the bosom of the Republican family, and evinces a return of grateful feelings for a revolutionary worthy.<sup>1</sup> I congratulate you very sincerely on this event, with every wish that your administration may be as happy to yourself as I am confident it will be propitious to the welfare of those who have called you into it; & I may add of those who resisted the call. The people are now able every where to compare the principles & policy of those who have borne the name of Republicans or Democrats, with the career of the adverse party; and to see & feel that the former are as much in harmony with the spirit of the nation & the genius of the Govt. as the latter was at variance with both.

<sup>1</sup> Eustis had just been elected governor of Massachusetts.

A great effort has been made by the fallen party to proclaim & eulogize an amalgamation of political sentiments & views. Who could be duped by it, when unmasked by the electioneering violence of the party where strong, and intrigues where weak?

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The effort has been carried even farther. It has been asserted that the Republicans have abandoned their Cause, and gone over to the policy of their opponents. Here the effort equally fails. It is true that under a great change of foreign circumstances, and with a doubled population, & more than doubled resources, the Republican party has been reconciled to certain measures & arrangements which may be as proper now as they were premature and suspicious when urged by the Champions of federalism. But they overlook, the overbearing & vindictive spirit, the apocryphal doctrines, & rash projects, which stamped on

federalism its distinctive character; and which are so much in contrast with the unassuming & unavenging spirit which has marked the Republican Ascendency.

There has been in fact a deep distinction between the two parties or rather, between the mass of the Nation, and the part of it which for a time got possession of the Govt.. The distinction has its origin in the confidence of the former, in the capacity of mankind for self Govt. and in a distrust of it by the other or by its leaders; and is the key to many of the phenomena presented by our political History. In all free Countries somewhat of this distinction must be looked for; but it can never be dangerous in a well informed Community and a well constructed Govt. both of which I trust will be found to be the happy lot of the U. S. The wrong paths into which the fathers may stray will warn the sons into the right one; according to the example under your own eye, which has touched your heart with such appropriate feelings.

As you say nothing of the state of your health I flatter myself it has undergone no unfavorable change, and that it will more than suffice for the labors thrown on your hands. Mrs. M. who shares largely in the gratification afforded by your letter, joins in this, and in every other wish that can express an affectionate esteem for yourself & Mrs. Eustis.